



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Office of the City Coordinator

Date: January 9, 2012
To: Council Vice President Robert Lilligren, Chair, Committee of the Whole
Referral to: City Council
Subject: **Resolution Supporting Reestablishment of Remittances to Somalia**
Recommendation: Approval
Previous Directives: None

Department Information

Prepared by: Ahmed Muhumud

Approved by:

David Rubedor, Neighborhood and Community Relations Director _____

Steven Bosacker, City Coordinator _____

Presenters in Committee: Ahmed Muhumud

Financial Impact

- No financial impact

Community Impact

- Neighborhood Notification: None Required
- City Goals: Many People, One Minneapolis

Supporting Information

Until recently, only one bank in Minnesota offered remittance services allowing the Somali-American community in Minnesota to send money to family and friends in Somalia. Based on concerns that this service could in the future be considered in violation of federal counter terrorism regulations, the bank stopped providing the service on December 30, 2011.

These remittances are a major source of income for many living in Somalia and surrounding countries. The loss of the ability for Somali-Americans to directly send money to Somalia creates a major hardship for many Somali families. This hardship is magnified by the drought Somalia is currently experiencing. Daniel Wordsworth, president of the Minneapolis based American Refugee Committee recently stated, "With famine and drought already impacting families throughout Somalia, the cessation of bank transfers will be devastating on a national scale".

The attached resolution calls on all parties to find a solution to this problem. Access and Outreach staff from the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department will remain in contact with the appropriate federal agencies, financial institutions, and the local Somali community to explore options to resolve the concerns of all parties.